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Titusville Amateur Radio Club

TARC NEWSLETTER

November 1989

President's Corner

One of the final acts as outgoing President of TARC:

I have decided to exercise the executive power of the Office of President and extend, under certain conditions, a pardon to all TARC members who were responsible for the following:

1. Electing yours truly to the Office of President.

2. Allowing me to lock my car keys inside my van at the Orlando Hamfest.

3. Providing me transportation to numerous hamfests.

4. Patiently bearing with me during my term.

5. Assisting and providing communications support to the JayCees for the Titusville Christmas Parade, Fourth of July fireworks display, the Indian River Raft Race, Civil Defense, and other civic functions.

6. Supporting and participating in club activities including but not limited to: producing the TARC Newsletter, serving on committees such as the Technical Committee and RFI/TVI Committee, antenna parties, repeater hut painting party, TARC Thursday night net, IHOP ragchewing, and Field Day and Special Events Station activities.

All of the above actions shall be pardoned as long as you continue items 2 through 6 and take an oath never to commit item 1 again.

At the November 20 meeting we will elect a new slate of officers to serve during 1990. The Christmas Dinner committee will announce the time, date, place, and menu for the annual Christmas Dinner. At the Christmas

See **President's Corner** on back

Upcoming Events

> **December 26**, January 23 – next TARC meetings, 7 p.m., JayCees Building on Singleton Ave.
> Every Thursday night – TARC Friendship Net, 7 p.m., 146.91 MHz (–600).
> 3rd Saturday of each month – SBARC / ARRL exams, 9:30 a.m. registration, FIT room Q22 in The Quad (under ham radio mast). For info call Jim Larson, home phone 768–1954 evenings.
> March 23–25, 1990 (tentative) – Orlando Hamcation, Orange County Civic Center (I–4, Exit 29).
> **December 15 – Deadline** for articles to be included in the October edition of the *TARC Newsletter.*

Officers

President: Bud Hughes K4CWG 269–0779
Vice Pres: Bob Nedimeyer W4VQB 269–1878
Secretary: Dennis Wren N4SDI 269–1762
Treasurer: Clyde Lee K4EOS 267–9375

Minutes of the October 24 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 by Bud (K4CWG). Everyone introduced themselves. The minutes were read and accepted. Clyde (K4EOS) gave the treasury report of $254.06 checking and $25.53 petty cash. He also reported there have been no long distance calls on the phone bill. This was accepted.

A committee was formed to make nominations for officers next year. The members are: Les (K4SJC), Clyde (K4EOS), Bob (W4VQB), and Fred (K4ZS). Bud (K4CWG) brought up to reimburse Wayne (KB4YLY) for the QSL cards used for the special event station. A motion was made to pay the bill. After some discussion this was passed. Bob (W4VQB) brought up that in the future to make sure anything that will involve an expense is included in the minutes.
Bud (K4CWG) brought up that the club had voted to incorporate and that he did not have the time to finish the paper work for this, and ask for volunteers to finish this. Also brought up was ARRL affiliation. A motion was made to form a phone committee to call the members and find out who was an ARRL member. Fred (K4ZS) offered to do this. A committe was also formed to look for a place to hold the Christmas dinner. Bob (K4VQB) introduced the speaker for the night who gave a talk on hams and the Titusville police dept.

November Featured Speaker

By Bob Nedimyer – W4VQB

Will be an FPL spokesman with a presentation on "Safety in the Ham Shack."

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269–2327

Ozzie's Adventures in the San Fransisco Earthquake
by Oz – N4SCY

(C) 1989 Robert Osband, ph (407) 267-6844

I was out in Sacramento on business. My company, Aircraft Inventory Center of Titusville had been planning an aircraft auction to be held outside Sacramento for more than six months now. On Tuesday, October 17 I'd helped set up the trade show that was set to start on Thursday. I got back to my hotel at 4:30 in the afternoon and dropped onto my bed for a nap. I woke up and looked at the clock. It said 5:05 PM PDT. I'd left my hand-held ham radio on, and it was very busy with reports coming in of an earthquake! The earthquake must have been what woke me up. I got out of bed, and went downstairs to the bar. There I found my colleagues watching ESPN World Series Pre-Game coverage, which had turned into an on-the-spot report of an earthquake in the San Francisco Bay area.

There was very little seismic activity in Sacramento, and we went out the following morning to the Rancho Murieta airport, where the airplane auction would go on as scheduled at the end of the week.

The only problem was that the telephone network gets "reconfigured" during a natural disaster or other emergency. In such cases, the network is reconfigured so that 3/4 of the circuits are outbound, and 1/4 of them are inbound. The theory is that relatives outside the affected area are jamming the circuits trying to get a call in, but those IN the affected area are moving, and will not be at the phone numbers those friends and relatives are calling. The circuits are configured such that when someone in the affected area wants to call out, they can (if they can wait for a dial tone, since EVERYONE wants to call out at the same time).

The gist was, we could reach our office, but they couldn't reach us. We had them call all the people who had preregistered for the auction, and let them know that it was still on, that Sacramento was unaffected, and that we looked forward to seeing them at the airport for our auction. While I couldn't get connected to our mainframe computer our aircraft database runs on via the Telenet data network, I did get on via rival Tymnet, and put up the same message, which caused the phone calls into our Titusville office to drop dramatically.

Instead of my company's airplane auction taking two days, it only took 3 hours to run the 50 aircraft that showed up through the auction (1/3 of what we'd originally expected). This left me with some time on my hands. The Sacramento ham radio repeater had been putting out requests for Ham Radio operators to go down to Red Cross centers in Oakland to provide communications for disaster relief operations. I checked in with Net Control, and said if I could get a ride, I'd like to help out. I got a response from John KI6UF (Ham operators don't keep track of last names, but they DO keep track of FCC assigned call-signs). He was driving down in response to the same call for operators and offered me a lift to Oakland. He picked me up at my hotel at 5:30 Saturday morning. President Bush had been through the area the day before, so we wouldn't be slowed down by glory hogging politicians, and their motorcades.

Neither of us knew Oakland well enough, so we got "talked in" to the Oakland Red Cross Headquarters over the radio. Every change of shift caused alot of talk-in traffic as new operators responded to the call for help. The city didn't look in such bad shape, but we were avoiding those areas of town that were most seriously affected.

We arrived at the Red Cross Chapter, and were told to go downstairs to sign in. I was assigned to a shelter at the Martin Luther King Jr school (the tactical callsign was MLK, used to reach anyone at the site – we always gave our own call after the tactical call sign when replying for FCC required identification). John was assigned to Bunche, or The Ralph Bunche Center. He dropped me off on his way to his site, and we set up a simplex radio frequency for talking to each other when we were relieved, for the ride back to Sacramento. As it turned out, he got relieved before I did, and was waiting for me at MLK when my relief showed up.

Message traffic is pretty boring at a Red Cross Shelter. Basically, you pass messages about what supplies are needed where, and maybe some one will tell you if they are on their way or not. Usually you never hear back from them until supplies show up a few hours later. Major problems to be handled here were a need for vans to the YMCA so people could take showers. Then an immediate request for clean underwear and socks so the people taking showers would have clean clothes to change into.

A pipe burst in the kitchen, and an urgent message went in for plumbing help. Then a related message requesting the school custodian's phone number, and then a request for the Principal's phone number. Of course, Oakland Red Cross (the tactical call sign for the Red Cross Chapter in Oakland that coordinated our relief efforts) said we'd have a better chance of finding these numbers than they did, as some of these people had been up for days and working around the clock. You could tell that pressure and fatigue were taking their toll.

"Pressure and fatigue were taking their toll." What a neat journalistic turn of phrase. Time magazine, or Newsweek will probably use it, stop there, end the paragraph, and go on to something else. What that phrase translates to, however, is people who were doing things that needed doing. It's not a question of being brave – it doesn't take bravery to open a can of beans, or put together cheese sandwiches (or even pass messages over a radio). You just want to keep going, simply because people are depending on you, and what you're doing. It takes alot out of you, because you just don't want to stop. One fellow had passed out the previous day from fatigue, and many of the volunteer workers were being FORCED to rest now and then. I could have gone longer,

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but needed my ride back to Sacramento for my flight back to Florida. I'd done only what I could within the framework of my other responsibilities to my job.

While a sign was posted at the door "NO PRESS" with instructions on who to contact at the Red Cross Chapter on 14th St in Oakland, Shelter Manager Diane Domestici was at one point obviously talking to a young lady of the press. Of course things wouldn't wait, and she was interrupted during the interview a number of times by shelter volunteers who needed instructions, and "executive decisions" that needed to be made. It also explained the radio call I took from Public Affairs with a phone number for the Shelter Manager to call. The phones at the school did not ring, and had to be watched for blinking lights. Needless to say, people could not be spared for that task. When phone calls were required, a radio message came in with the number for someone here to call out.

People trying to bring donations to the shelter where told to bring them to Oakland's Red Cross chapter. Used clothing was directed to the Salvation Army Center on 7th Street. The public did not realize that various relief agencies had their own assigned tasks within the stated goals of their own organization during a disaster of this nature. Contributions couldn't be accepted at the shelter, because all disaster relief HAD to be accounted for through the Red Cross Chapter which was headquarters for relief efforts.

The shelter itself was set up in the auditorium/cafeteria of the school. No one here was going to starve, since there was plenty of food for the volunteers to prepare in the school's kitchen. Hot food was available at each meal. Breakfast was scrambled eggs, sausage, toast, fruit, and coffee or milk. Lunch was hot chicken noodle soup, and spaghetti. Of course, I couldn't move from my radios, so I was brought meals.

In the midst of all this emergency related message traffic, joggers were running a race in Contra Costa County just over the ridge, and the radio repeater used to carry the radio messages was in use for race support, as well as Red Cross operations. It was five days after the initial disaster, and life must go on, after all. The surprising thing was that the contention for the repeater wasn't bad. It wasn't busy very often, and when I did have to wait to pass a message, it was usually because Berkeley Red Cross was talking to Oakland Red Cross.

As I was instructing my relief operator about the facilities available for him (how to keep the outside antenna up so a signal can get out, etc.), a message came over the net that transportation was needed for a woman who was giving birth. It went in my log at 4:07 PM.

My log was a steno notebook, where I made a record of all messages in and out. It was appropriate that on the way in, John KI6UF and I had stopped for breakfast at a Burger King, and I was able to get a button with their new advertising slogan, "Sometimes you gotta break the rules." There was no time at all to be formatting messages for American Radio Relay League standard NTS message format. There were no radiogram forms at the shelter anyway. I pulled out the half a pad I keep in my back pack, and used them for incoming messages.

Usually, I'd deliver the message (just a simple, "Hey Diane," and tell her Oakland Red Cross' request or reply). Then, I'd write it up on a message form for her records. Outgoing messages, I just wrote on the steno pad, and read it out over the air. There was no time for Message Numbers, and check counts, and the like. I DID use NTS (National Traffic System) format for over the air transmission. That is, I said "XRAY" for sentence breaks, and such. I used slow read out of messages, knowing that they were being written down at the other end in long-hand. I remembered, as I'd been taught in the Indian River Amateur Radio Club "Novice" Class 2 years ago, that I was transmitting a message for reception, not merely talking. Of course it sounded funny, but it was understood.

First I'd jot down the time. I'd write in a message number, and I circled it (so it would be noticed AS a message number). I wrote an "R" next to it if the message was received. Of the 16 messages in my log, only 5 were received. These circled numbers designated "Messages" rather than "things noted in the log." I'd jot down frequencies and phone numbers that were being sent to other stations (with the time I got them – all log entries got a timestamp). This way, if our station needed the information, it was already in the log, and I wouldn't have to request it from Oakland Red Cross. When the longshoreman had been found after 82 hours in the rubble of "The Cyprus" (the name the locals use for the collapsed Interstate 880 Nimitz Freeway which runs above Cypress St), I logged it in at 11:23 AM. It is hard to believe the effect this information had in buoying up spirits of people who had worked for days trying to make people's lives easier after the loss of their homes.

As I made the last log entry, my ride back to Sacramento arrived, having been relieved early by someone who had been to Bunche before, and knew where she was going. My relief got up on frequency with his hand-held radio on the outside antenna, and checked into Oakland Red Cross, saying he'd be there as long as his batteries held out. I knew what he meant, because If I hadn't had the 8 AA batteries for the TNC (Terminal Node controller) of my portable packet rig (which wasn't needed), I'd have had a problem staying on the air myself. There were plenty of D and C cells in the shelter, however, and I'm sure something could be cobbled together. I said goodbye to Diane, who thanked me profusely for my help, and John and I hit freeway for home.

My airplane auction colleagues had spent their time driving up to Lake Tahoe, and some of them actually had a "good day" at the casinos. It didn't bother me, because I'd had the opportunity to help out in a disaster and prove the worth of all this "radio hobby stuff" they usually ride me about. After all, I'd done the work they'd brought me out for, and my own time before I caught Sunday's plane was my own to "waste" as I pleased, and helping out pleased me no end.

The **TARC Newsletter** is (usually) published on a monthly basis. Articles are published based on their newsworthiness to TARC membership, space available, and ease of entry to the publishing medium.

Preferred transfer methods are EMail to *Doug Reed* at Tech-Talk BBS, EMail on 2 meter packet to N4QVY@KB4LB or N4QVY@WD4HIM, direct packet, 3.5" AmigaDOS 880K disk, 3.5" MS-DOS 360K disk, 5.25" MS-DOS 360K disk, direct landline modem, and print / hand-written / hardcopy formats, in that order. Separate each paragraph with a blank line for ease of re-formatting a publishing format.

Article / classified deadline is two Fridays prior to the date of the monthly meeting. The next deadline is **December 15**.

Articles may be given to the editor, Doug – N4QVY, at the IHOP on net nights, or left with Bud – K4CWG, where it will hopefully make its way to the aforementioned editor.

The **TARC Newsletter** is assembled on a Commodore Amiga computer using Gold Disk's PageSetter desktop publishing software and output to a PostScript compatable laser printer. Bulk printing service is donated by Brevard Office Equipment, Inc. Folding, stamping, and mailing services are usually 'donated' by Bud (K4CWG), Les (K4SJC), and anyone Bud can slyly talk into *visiting* him. Thanks to all those involved in this maddening once (thank goodness) a month event.

Classifieds

Butternut vertical (10–160), Morgan – K4GEA, 268–1205.

For sale, 60' Rohn 25 tower, $150; 45' crank-up tower, $75; CDR rotor, like new, $25; Commodore 64 w/PS, $45, 2M Heathkit 2036A w/50 W linear, $175; Cushcraft AV3 vertical tri-band antenna (new), $50; Vern – KB4RBU, 267–2907.

Toshiba T1200F laptop computer, $1100, Doug – N4QVY, 268–1934.

President's Corner

Dinner, the new officers will be installed and will assume "command."

The JayCees are counting on our support for the Christmas Parade for which the date will be announced.

Many of our friends are returning from up north and will winter here in our area. We are delighted to have all of you with us.

The Editor's Desk

by Doug Reed – N4QVY

Many thanks to Ozzie (N4SCY) for his article detailing his communications assistance in the San Fransisco earthquake. It's great to have another double page *and* timely article.

Also thanks to Dennis (N4SDI) and Bud (K4CWG) for their official inserts.

ill try to get a December issue out, although it may a bit scant. It may or may not make it out before e Christmas Dinner / Meeting, so make sure to me to the November Meeting for details on the nner.

Happy Thanksgiving to all.

W4 VQB
Bob Nedimyer
868 Hunter Park
Titusville Fl 32780

YOUR CLUB DUES EXPIRE: JAN 90
73 GL ES GUD DX de TARC !